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SOAK IT UP...

PHOTO OF BEACHGOERS ENJOYING THE LAST HINTS OF SUMMER AT NEW BUFFALO PUBLIC BEACH BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

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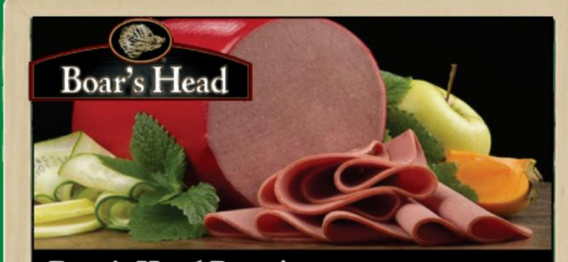

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New Buffalo DDA board approves pursuing extension

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Members of the New Buffalo Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors approved going forward to the city council with regards to extending the DDA at a special meeting Tuesday, Sept. 5.

Chair Robert Kemper said that the DDA's term is up at the end of the year.

The DDA may be renewed for another five or 10 years, with mayor John Humphrey saying that this would be dependent on what projects the DDA is looking at with regards to its master plan, what city financing looks like and how they'd use the current TIF funding to "make that happen."

He also said it's important to take into account the ideas to "potentially gather some more properties" that could "generate more money."

Humphrey asked them what properties have been "languishing here in town for a long time that are within DDA territory."

"What is the stuff you guys want to look at that has just been sitting dormant forever that the DDA has the legal authority to purchase for the future of downtown development?" he said.

Three main projects that the DDA has discussed as priorities are: the pedestrian bridge over the harbor, parking and bathroom facilities in the district and administrative support for the city with regards to future projects, as Kemper said that the city "doesn't have the bandwidth now to throw more support financially and administratively to the DDA to take on these projects."

Members of the DDA will be presenting on the DDA's potential projects list at a council meeting in the near future.

Kemper said that if the council approves the extension, then it will be publicly noticed and work and will move onto taxing agencies, such as Lake Michigan College, the New Buffalo Township Public Library and the county.

The county may then agree to "support the city of New Buffalo and its efforts to improve the downtown district and these projects," Kemper said.

"And they sign off on it and we exist," he said.

Members also discussed the issue with parking.

Ben Smock, chair of the economic development subcommittee, said that at a recent meeting, the 85-spot lot that the city currently rents at the corner of Whittaker and Buffalo streets was discussed "at length."

Kemper had presented on strategies and ideas with regards to the lot.

Smock said that not only is the lot valuable for parking, but it could also be improved upon with regards to aesthetics, signage and potentially having public restrooms were discussed.

There were questions regarding issues with bonds for the city to "finance this."

Humphrey said that it's important that the city acquire the lot.

He added that city manager Darwin Watson is negotiating with Seville Investments, the owner of the lot, and years ago and made an offer that was rejected, adding that the owners are now asking for $1.2 million more than what was initially offered.

"The biggest problem of all is we've allowed that parking lot's use to satisfy the criteria of all these business' parking requirements surrounding it without owning it," he said.

He said the question is if there's an agreement from Seville on the suggestions that the economic committee members have made.

Humphrey added that it's also important for them to "put our heads together to look at other spaces as quickly as possible as well."

Board members approved proceeding with recommendations to approve the white and red color scheme (the original one of the lighthouse at New Buffalo Public Beach.

The quickest way of ending a war is to lose it.
— George Orwell

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

CITY OF NEW BUFFALO
JOHN HUMPHREY, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJESKI, JOHN HUMPHREY, BRIAN FLANAGAN, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
PETE RAHM, MICHELLE HEIT, JUDY H. ZABICKI, PATTY IAZZETTO, JACK ROGERS
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
L. Paul Bailey, Sheriff
Chuck Heit, Undersheriff
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, BRADLEY BURNER, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, BILL MARSKE
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM

VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
MARY ROBERTSON, CLERK
HARRY WALDER BLAKE O'HALLORAN, JAMES BRACEWELL, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES

MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

New Buffalo planners approve SLU permit for fitness studio

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Members of the New Buffalo City Planning Commission approved a special land use (SLU) permit for a future fitness studio, which would include massage therapy, at 30 West Buffalo St. in New Buffalo at their Tuesday, Sept. 5, meeting.

Per the meeting packet, the property is 8712 square feet in area and provides 66 feet of frontage on North Barton and 132 feet of frontage on West Buffalo. The surrounding area is zoned Central Business District (CBD) and is occupied by commercial land use.

Prana/Life Studio owner Christine Frisch, who was there with her husband, said that she's lived across the border on the state line for over three years and has been a licensed massage therapist since 2017, having received licensure in three different states and completed over 600 hours of training to be a massage therapist.

She said that, while this is her first business location, she's been a business owner since 2017, having practiced exclusively at clients' homes.

Frisch added that she's also a Pilates and yoga instructor, which are also the offerings she plans to offer to clients at the studio.

Previously, the building was used as an immediate care clinic by La Porte Healthcare Foundation. Frisch purchased the building from the foundation, which moved out over a decade ago and has been renting it as office space to Berkshire Hathaway and others.

The current property at 30 West Buffalo Street

Frisch said she's restored the original floor plan "more or less," with open conference rooms and show rooms.

The studio would have two treatment rooms and offer massage therapy as well as small group fitness classes and private instruction.

While the studio will be open year round, Frisch said that services will be by appointment only and she wouldn't be offering services outside of the hours of 7:30 a.m. for fitness classes and 7 p.m.

Currently, she doesn't plan to be open every day.

"Right now, it's a one woman show - I certainly hope to recruit others as instructors and massage therapists," Frisch said.

With regards to parking, she said that they've acquired both properties that the foundation owned and were able to expand the parking. Frisch added that they'll "continue to control that parking through easement after we hope to sell 9 North Barton Street, the neighboring parcel." This results in about 18 parking spaces, which includes a handicapped spot in that lot.

"Again, it's small group fitness, so we don't anticipate housing groups larger than 12 for class or any other reason," Frisch said.

Planners approved the SLU in a 4-0 vote (planner Bill McCollum abstained), with planner Debbie Schmidt adding that it's "great to have something in that space."

Planners also discussed the proposed zoning map, which was created by Houseal Lavigne, an urban and geographical design firm, with input from the city.

Planning Commission chair Paul Billignslea said that, once the map is adjusted and everything the planners discussed is finalized, a final packet will be sent to the planners and city council members for review and a public hearing will be scheduled.

During public comment, resident Carie O'Donnell, who resides at 16 North Chicago Street, asked that the planners, in reviewing the zoning map, consider rezoning the lot that her house is located on back to commercial.

She said that it was zoned commercial/residential when she bought the property over 20 years ago. This is what attracted her to buy it, as she put her business there; however, it's now zoned residential. O'Donnell added that three quarters of her property is surrounded by commercial, including the Dairy Queen property next to it, which she owns, and that most of her neighbors would "fine" with it being zoned back to commercial.

Talent hits a target no one else can hit.
Genius hits a target no one else can see.
— Arthur Schopenhauer

SCHOLASTICS

New Buffalo school board approves RFQ for attainable housing project

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Members of the New Buffalo Area Schools Board of Education approved an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) with regards to the district's ongoing attainable housing project at their Monday, Sept. 11, meeting.

At the Aug. 17 meeting, Eric Neagu of The Antero Group said that the district has acquired a number of parcels at the site on Lubke Street (across from the elementary school) to potentially develop attainable housing there as well as land for the Building Trades program to develop future homes. The parcels have been replatted and combined into a larger parcel. The parcel has been subdivided so a parcel is available for the Building Trades program.

Neagu said they've developed qualifications for a developer to partner with the school system.

Superintendent Adam Bowen said that a meeting was held between New Buffalo Township's legal counsel, the school district's legal counsel, New Buffalo Township Supervisor Michelle Heit, Dr. Michael Lindley, former interim superintendent, and Neagu.

Neagu said that the RFQ has been vetted by both the township's attorney and the school district's, with the township's attorney being "very supportive in terms of different things they might be able to do to help."

"We kind of left it open with respect to township's participation, with the goal of getting a developer on board to be in partnership with the school system," he said.

The RFQ was released to the public Sept. 13. Deadline for proposals is 5 p.m. Oct. 4 and notification of awards will be Oct. 23.

Board members were given an update on the Bison Education Trust Scholarship by Denise Tuszynski, director of human resources.

Per the Trust's guidelines on nbas.org, all students who graduate from New Buffalo Area Schools, are residing in the district, and have been New Buffalo students in 9 -12 grades, or longer (enrollment in grades nine through 12 and residency must be continuous) are eligible for the scholarship.

Students must also be enrolled and attending a post-secondary degree or certification program at any accredited institution, while maintaining a 2.0 grade point average or "achieving adequate progress in a certification program."

Students are given $5,000/year maximum for five years within a 10 year period, not to exceed $25,000.

Also per the guidelines, all students enrolled during 2009-2010 were eligible for the funds regardless of residency and if they were continuously enrolled in grades 9-12. Beginning with 2010-2011, new non-residents didn't qualify.

Tuszynski said that out of the 66 eligible graduates in the class of 2010, who had until 2020 to use the funds, 91% used a portion or all of the funds. There were 33 of them who had obtained a degree or some type of certification and 28 of them used all $25,000. Two of the students became teachers, one is a lawyer, another is a massage therapist and one is a business owner.

So far, out of the 41 eligible graduates in the class of 2023, 51% are using the funds.

Superintendent Adam Bowen said that a meeting was held between New Buffalo Township's legal counsel, the school district's legal counsel, New Buffalo Township Supervisor Michelle Heit, Dr. Michael Lindley, former interim superintendent, and Neagu.

Students have used the funds toward becoming a domestic violence and sexual assault preventionist, working in one of the top 10 largest law firms in the world (based on revenue) doing analytics, a clinical director for a medical spa and a licensed funeral director and embalmer in two states.

Bowen said that MSTEP scores became public last week and that, based on a program that takes all the data throughout the state, New Buffalo third through eighth grade students placed sixth overall in the state based on English Language Arts (ELA), math, science and social studies out of 946 schools in Michigan.

He also revealed the following breakdown of scores: third grade ranked fourth in the state in ELA and third in math; fourth grade ranked third in the state in ELA and second in math; fifth grade ranked fourth in ELA, 21st in math, 12th in social studies and 32nd in science; sixth grade ranked eighth in ELA overall and ninth in math in the state; seventh grade ranked 11th in ELA and 29th in math; eighth grade ranked 127th in ELA, seventh in math, 123rd in science and 46th in social studies and 11th grade ranked 38th in ELA, 39th in math SAT, 82nd in science and 94th in social studies.

The executive committee met recently with regards to a co-op for girls' softball with River Valley. After the board's regular meeting at 6, there will be a special meeting with River Valley at 7:15 p.m. Monday, Sept. 25, during which the co-op will be an action item. Bowen added that the transition merging plan with high school sports will also be revealed.

Board members accepted the resignation from Shana Kirby, New Buffalo Day Care lead, effective immediately.

Board members appointed Bowen as the representative for the New Buffalo Recreational Authority.

Board members approved relinquishing the 2023-2024 Title III and Section 41 funds from the current fiscal year. Bowen said that the district would be getting a "very small amount" and that it would cost them more money to do the paperwork than what they'd actually end up getting

Bowen said that he was able to make administrative guidelines for the district's suicide policy, which was what was missing from the policy, with the help of the wellness team and had shared them with board members, so there was no need to change the current policy.

Raiders blown out this time in first loss

BY STAN MADDUX

The Red Arrow Raiders after opening the season with blow out victories were humbled by a team more talented than their first two opponents.

The Raiders were defeated 68 to 26 Friday, Sept. 8, at Marcellus.

Head coach Matt Johnson said he knew his players were in for a test but felt it would be a much closer game.

He said lapses of execution on offense and defense were major factors in the drubbing along with an off night by the coaching staff.

"We were out played. We were out coached. They had a better game plan than we did," he said.

The Raiders coming into the game with more than 1,000 passing and rushing yards combined were limited to about 200 yards of total offense by a physical and disciplined Marcellus defense.

Marcellus was also aggressive in punching holes in the offensive line that cost the Raiders major yard losses on several plays

"They were bringing pressure and we didn't do a very good job blocking," Johnson said.

The highlights for the Raiders on offense included a kick-off returned for a touchdown by Payton Lijewski.

M'nason Smothers caught a pass then dodged would be tacklers to make it into the end zone.

Quarterback Ethan Lijewski also hooked up with Owen Slavens for a touchdown pass.

Johnson said the team was also hurt by the absence of full back and middle linebacker Ryder Wolnik, who was nursing a knee injury.

He then blamed himself for not making the adjustments that could have been effective in stopping Marcellus.

"It's on the staff. It's on me. I need to do a better job of recognizing when something is not working and making the adjustments in the game," he said.

Johnson said he also felt his players didn't respond favorably after falling behind early in the game.

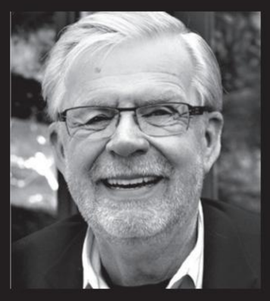
"We got to develop a little more mental fortitude. When things are not going our way we got to learn how to fight out of those situations," he said.

The Raiders consisting of players from New Buffalo and River Valley high schools play again Friday, Sept. 15, at Eau Claire.

SPORTS

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO



When I was in grade school, I heard about this kid that behaved badly, and the teacher made him write a 1,000 word essay about transportation for punishment.

The hour to turn in the assignment was rapidly approaching when he had a brilliant idea. He wrote, "Tarzan lives in the jungle. To get around, he swings from tree to tree…to tree…to tree."

He wrote "to tree" 990 times and the teacher accepted it because she thought it was clever.

I pondered being clever myself tonight with a column that went something like this: "The Bears played the Packers today. The Packers owned the Bears like they have for years…and years…and years…etc.

Those who know me know that I'm the eternal optimist, but after watching that game Sunday, it's difficult, even for optimists, to be positive about the upcoming season.

Last season was painful for Bears fans as they finished with the worst record in the NFL.

But the team fired about half of their roster, added a lot of rookies and free agents who seemed like they were really good, and the fans bought in.

I can't remember a season opener that had every one connected with the Bears and most of their fans more optimistic.

The Packers no longer had Aaron Rodgers after all. Justin Fields was ready to become an elite quarterback for the Bears. Everything seemed to be pointing in the right direction.

But then the game started.

Fields looked like he hadn't improved. The offensive line looked like it did last year when they were terrible. The defense was terrible, allowing Jordan Love to resemble Aaron Rodgers and Brett Favre by generating a weak pass rush.

The Bears had a lot of penalties and they were out coached. Nothing went right.

While writing this, I started to think that maybe it wasn't so bad after all. No matter how bad it seemed, it only counted for one loss. There's a lot of time to turn things around. Because there were so many new players, and so many youngsters, that to expect them to be a well-oiled machine in their opening game was kind of pie in the sky thinking.

So all of you Bears fans, the Bears play the Packers again in the last game of the season. We will all be able to see the progress they have, or have not, made then. But every game between the Packers' games will count the same.

So let's remember how hopeful we were before the first Packers game and be a positive influence on our team by cheering them on to victory. Next comes Tampa Bay, who knocked off the Vikings. I think the Bears are going to kick their butts. I'm still thinking the Bears and Lions are the class of the division.

Martin Luther King Jr. said, "We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

In all things that you do, consider the end.
— Solon

DRUG DEALER CAUGHT BETWEEN DELIVERIES

A Michigan City man was out delivering to his customers, but it wasn't pizza he was bringing.

According to La Porte County Police, he was going to their doorsteps with methamphetamine and marijuana.

Jamel Williams, 43, was arrested during a traffic stop just outside of Michigan City last week by Indiana State Police.

Police said he was accepting orders on his cell phone that night and driving to South Bend and back, whenever necessary, to meet demand for drugs from his customers.

With help from a K9 dog, police said a whopping 16 grams of methamphetamine were found in the vehicle, along with a small amount of marijuana.

Williams claimed the meth was for his own personal use, but text messages exchanged between him and his alleged customers revealed he was accepting and filling their drug orders.

The investigation also revealed he was on his way to make an alleged drug delivery to a customer at Dunes Inn before stopped for what appeared to be a license plate violation prior to reaching the motel in the area of U.S. 421 and 400 North.

Williams has been charged in La Porte Superior Court 1 with dealing and possessing methamphetamine.

On Tuesday, the bodies of two adults were discovered in a room at the same motel.

So far, police have not shed light on the cause of their deaths.

However, police said it appears the deaths were an isolated incident and there was no immediate public safety threat.

Anyone with information about the deaths were asked the La Porte County Sheriff's Office at 219-326-7700. — STAN MADDUX

Lawsuit threatened over Housing for Homeless Plan

BY STAN MADDUX

A lawsuit could be in the works to try and stop plans to provide housing for homeless people with mental health and other behavioral issues.

Recently, the La Porte City Council approved a zoning change that opened the door for Housing Opportunities, an organization providing housing to homeless and other low-income people in La Porte and Porter counties, to move forward on plans to create 16 housing units in the former Coca Cola bottling plant in the 200 block of Rumely Street.

Aurelio Melgoza of 204 North Street told the City Council over 500 residents in his neighborhood have pledged, in writing, to contribute $1,000 apiece to help residents should anything bad happen to them from someone living at the proposed housing facility.

"We will not live in fear," he said.

Melgoza said residents in the neighborhood are also willing to file a lawsuit naming each member of the City Council as defendants in an attempt to try and stop the development.

"I suggest everyone rethink and ask if it is worth it," he said.

Under the plans, housing applicants would have to be homeless, have some sort of confirmed physical or mental health disability or be a substance abuser.

Melgoza and one other resident, Richard Horner, mentioned a murder in 2017 at a Housing Opportunities residence in Michigan City to underscore their concerns.

Charges were recently filed against the once-homeless suspect, John Hallett.

Hallett, 54, allegedly told police he choked his roommate to death and allowed his body to remain on the basement floor for nearly two months, before dismembering and disposing the decaying parts in municipal trash cans.

"There are a lot of children in our neighborhood, many of whom are young girls, who walk to school. Do you really want to expose them to these additional risks," Horner said.

Resident Linda Dilks said she was a director of a facility serving low-income and homeless people with similar issues in South Bend and such housing should not be in a residential area.

"Somebody is going to get hurt. I do know what I am talking about," she said.

Dilks also said she already feels unsafe in her neighborhood and doesn't want to feel even more afraid.

"I carry mace outside with me to let the dog out at night because we are not safe now. This is going to increase when you put people with substance abuse and mental health problems in that facility," she said.

Mayor Tom Dermody seemed unfazed by the latest expression of concerns from residents feeling insulted and betrayed by their elected officials.

Dermody said Housing Opportunities has helped thousands of people by providing them with affordable housing, and also previously expressed there's a need locally for such housing.

"We will not turn our backs on those individuals and we have people sitting in this room right now that have been supportive of not turning their backs on affordable housing. We will not turn our backs," he said.

Dilks pointed out the facility will not be for people who are simply down on their luck.

"I am not against housing people who need housing. What I am against is the type of people they are going to put in that housing," she said.

TROTOM's documentary about Apple Cider Century premiering next weekend

The 50th Apple Cider Century will take place this month, and The Region of Three Oaks Museum will mark the occasion by showing a documentary about how the ACC began and quickly grew into the nation's biggest one-day century ride.

The "Father of the Apple Cider Century," Bryan Volstorf, sat for lengthy interviews with the museum and provided hundreds of photos and videos of past Apple Cider Century rides. TROTOM Vice President Nick Bogert is shaping the material into a documentary, his sixth film for the museum.

"Apple Cider Century: Small Town, Big Ride" will premiere at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 22, at the Three Oaks Heritage Hall, 8 E. Linden Street. Admission is $5 for museum members. If space permits, non-members will be allowed to attend after purchasing a museum membership ($15) at the door.

The Oilm will be shown again on the day of the ride, at 2 and 4 p.m., at the Heritage Hall. ACC riders with wristbands who want to know more about the ride's history will be asked for a $10 donation to TROTOM.

The museum will sell DVD copies of the Apple Cider Century documentary at a later date. All proceeds from the screenings and DVD sales will go to support TROTOM, which is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and presenting the history of the area.

The museum will remain open from noon to 5 p.m. Friday-Sunday, through the end of October. — STAFF REPORTS

Deal struck for La Porte annexation

BY STAN MADDUX

The door has opened for the City of La Porte to annex the 39 North Conservancy District without a potential bitter legal fight between the governing bodies.

The city council joined the conservancy district board in approving a Memorandum of Understanding governing the annexation Wednesday, Sept. 6.

Under the MOU, the city will pay $2 million for water and sewer lines the district installed to attract new business and housing development once the conservancy formed in 1997.

The money will be distributed to property owners within the conservancy district in the form of credits on their water and sewer bills.

The city must also live up to its promises such as replacing water lines with larger ones and other upgrades to improve water flow and fire protection.

The current lines because of higher demand from new business and residential growth are now only large enough to serve existing customers, which prohibits more development from happening within district boundaries.

City Attorney Nick Otis praised the conservancy for attracting enough development to raise its assessed property tax valuation from $4 million to $40 million.

However, Otis said the district has outlived its ability to further grow by not being able to finance the improvements needed for its water system while the city has the means to pay the estimated $10 million cost.

"There's only about 150 property owners out there so you're talking about a $10 million project that would have to be funded by a small group of individuals," he said.

The council also approved an ordinance to annex about 70-percent of the conservancy district territory, consisting of more than 900 acres along Indiana 39 from about Severs Road to the Indiana Toll Road.

City Planner Craig Phillips said the remainder of the ground containing over 30 parcels north of the Indiana Toll Road could not be annexed at the same time.

He explained the land sought to be annexed next will not be contiguous to the city limits as required by the state until after the first parcel is brought inside the municipal boundaries.

Phillips said the public has 90 days to file an appeal to the first phase of the annexation.

If there's no remonstrance, Phillips said the annexation will become official in early December.

He said any challenge would likely fail because of the city having signatures from 57 percent of the landowners requesting annexation within the conservancy district.

Under state law, municipalities must have 51 percent of the signatures from supporting property owners to annex.

Mayor Tom Dermody, who aggressively led the charge down the once bitter road toward annexation, gave thanks to everyone involved, including the 39 North Conservancy District Board.

"It's been a long negotiation," he said.

The once mostly reluctant district board started caving in after the city obtained enough signatures to meet the state requirement.

Conservancy District Attorney Shaw Friedman said he advised board members to accept the agreement because the city would likely win any legal effort to stop the annexation from having well above the required number of landowner signatures.

Friedman said a courtroom defeat would have meant the conservancy being left empty handed.

"It's really the feeling of both the district and the city this is a win, win all the way around," he said.

La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership Executive Director Bert Cook said the prospects of further growing that area are high judging by the number of developers that seem to be waiting on the water system improvements.

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Black market for dispensary marijuana possible outside Michigan

BY STAN MADDUX

A man and woman allegedly caught in Indiana with 15 pounds of dispensary marijuana products legally purchased in southwest Michigan could face charges of drug dealing.

Under Indiana law, marijuana is still illegal and the large amount confiscated exceeds what's necessary to look at pursuing felony drug dealing charges.

The brother and sister from Wisconsin were apparently heading back home on the Indiana Toll Road when pulled over by La Porte County Police for speeding Sept. 3.

During the traffic stop, police said the driver, Marsha Cruz, 43, told the officer they went to Buchanan to "hang out" for a few hours.

Several marijuana dispensaries operate in Buchanan and a few other surrounding communities.

Her answers to follow up questions from the officer provided no real specifics on their purpose for driving over three hours from Waukesha in the southern part of Wisconsin, a state where marijuana also remains against the law.

Police said Cruz also changed the subject multiple times during her conservation with the officer to apparently evade his efforts at getting to the truth.

According to police, she then denied having any drugs in the vehicle when asked by the officer becoming more suspicious about their reason for the trip.

Eventually, her brother, Miguel Cruz, 49, allegedly revealed they drove to Buchanan to obtain dispensary marijuana.

A search of the 2013 Cadillac allegedly turned up four large paper bags containing various dispensary marijuana products.

Some of the marijuana was raw or contained in already rolled cigarettes. The other products were in the form of candy, drinks and wax containing THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, police said.

The two individuals were given a warning ticket for speeding and allowed to go.

Police said warrants for their arrests could be issued later depending on the outcome of the investigation. The products were confiscated and stored as evidence for potential use in a criminal case.

Under Indiana law, marijuana weighing anywhere from 30 grams to 10 pounds could result in a level 6 felony dealing in marijuana charge punishable by a six month to 30 month sentence.

Marijuana exceeding 10 pounds can bring a level 5 felony marijuana dealing charge, which carries a potential one to six year sentence.

How the individuals obtained such a large quantity of dispensary marijuana is not known but it could have been from multiple trips to more than one store.

In Michigan, there is no daily limit on how much dispensary marijuana can be purchased by an adult in a single day.

However, each transaction is limited to no more than 2.5 grams.

La Porte County Sheriff Ron Heeg said he has no doubt anyone in possession of such large quantities of dispensary marijuana doesn't have it just for their own personal use.

"15 pounds is not recreational. That's distributing. Buying it to sell if off and everything else. That's not recreational," he said.

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Art season continues at Michiana Humane Society with 'Fall Into Art'

Tickets are now available for the third Annual Fall Into Art fundraiser on Saturday, Oct. 7.

The event is a one-day happening that will feature an afternoon of self-guided tours at private artist studios from noon to 5 p.m. The event concludes with a spectacular after party from 5 to 8 p.m. at Section House in Sawyer with live music, live auction hosted by Janet Davies, raffle, open bar and appetizers.

Check-in will be from 11 a.m. to noon.

Tickets for the tours and after party are $125 or $75 for the after party only. One hundred percent of the proceeds will benefit the hundreds of pets that Michiana Humane Society will care for in 2023.

This year's artists include Brent Walker – tie dye, Cameron Covert – ceramics, Gregg Fraley and the Hairy Buffalos – Improv, Janis Kanter – textile collage, Lenore Senovic – painter, Michelle Stambaugh (Mud-Luscious) – ceramics and jewelry, Norman Leigh Design – woodworking nd Susan Henshaw – paint nd photography.

Follow the Facebook Event, which will share a spotlight of each artist and give an insider's view of their process Oct. 7.

For more information, visit www.michianapets.org. — STAFF REPORTS

HARBOR COUNTRY HIKERS PLAN BEACH HIKE

The Harbor Country Hikers will hike the Lake Michigan beaches from Cherry Beach to Warren Dunes State Park at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 16.

The three-mile-plus hike will be followed by a picnic at Harbert Community Park (bring your own).

Hike leader Janet Schrader, longtime beachcomber and head of a business called Sand Pirate that teaches sand sculpting to corporations and families as a team-building exercise, will point out natural features of Great Lakes shorelines, as well as fossils and beach glass. Along the way, there will be three streams to ford--water shoes or plastic trash bags are recommended to keep shoes and boots dry.

Though membership in the Hikers is preferred, all are welcome at this hike. Attendees are advised to wear a sun hat or cap and insect repellent, and to bring plenty of water. This hike is rated moderate to difficult and is expected to last about two-and-a-half hours. Driving directions and additional information about this event are available at the Hikers' website, www.harborcountryhikers.com

— STAFF REPORTS

Lest we forget

State Rep. Brad Paquette is joined by his guest, Berrien County Sheriff L. Paul Bailey, at the Michigan State Capitol for the annual House of Representatives 9-11 Memorial Ceremony Thursday, Sept. 7. Legislators invited first responders and members of the military from their communities to be their guests for the service. The ceremony included the ringing of a fire bell in memory of first responders and public safety officers who died honorably in the line of duty throughout Michigan in the past year.

— STAFF REPORTS

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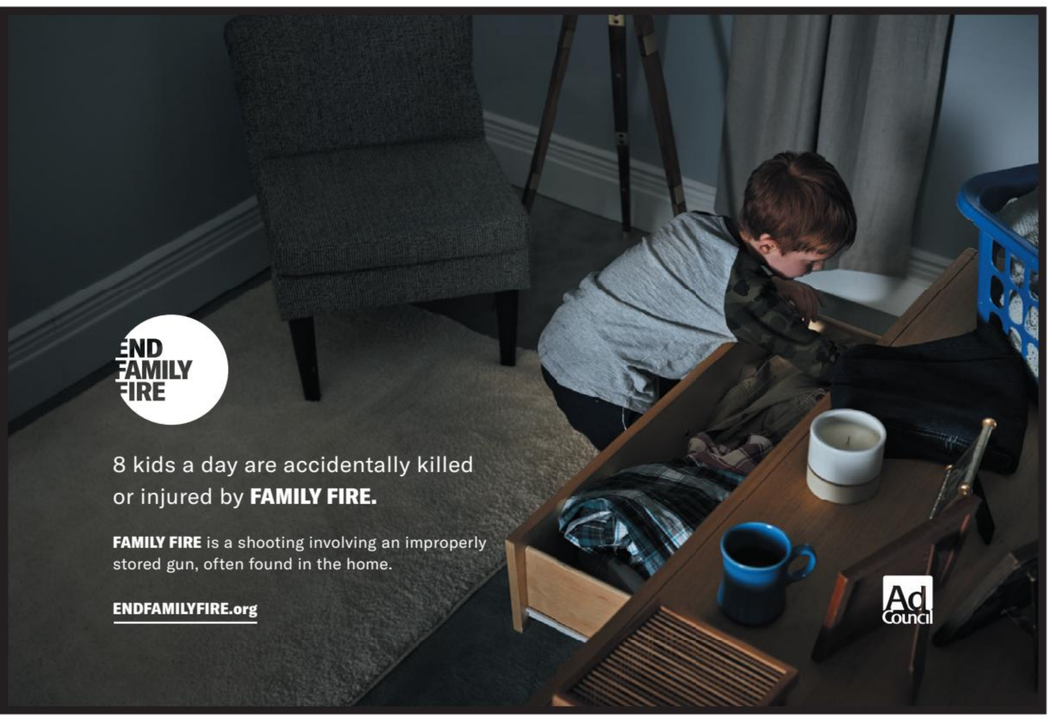
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OBITUARIES

Joseph Patrick Bonifate
1947-2023

Joseph Patrick Bonifate, 76, of New Buffalo, Michigan, died Monday, September 11, 2023.

His life began March 17, 1947, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the oldest of four sons born to Morris and Margaret Bonifate. He married the love of his life, Jackie F. Elliott March 5, 2005, in New Buffalo, Michigan.

Joseph was a devoted and loving husband, father, and grandfather. He cherished his wife and spent every second with her that he could. He had a sound compass for Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. He was a proud Vietnam veteran having served in the U.S. Navy from 1966 through 1969. Joseph received the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with Fleet Marine Corps Combat Operations Insignia, three Bronze Stars, and a Vietnam Campaign Medal. He was a volunteer firefighter and Chief of Police for the Town of West Mayfield, Pennsylvania. He had a caring and compassionate heart. He loved to cook Italian food and was known for his potato salad. Joseph had a great, but dry, sense of humor. His "dad jokes" were top notch. He was Daddy to his late furbaby, Cambria. He was a devoted Steelers fan.

Joseph will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by his wife of eighteen years, Jackie Bonifate of New Buffalo; children, Robert Jones of Michigan City, Indiana, Kristie (Ted) Pirkel of Three Oaks, Julia Lear of New Buffalo, James (Jessica) Lear of La Porte, Indiana, Joel (Sydney) Lear of Hartford; seven grandchildren, Victoria Pirkel, Daniella (Jonathan) Burns, Brady Stambaugh, Wesley Pirkel, Jason Pirkel, Nova Lear, Luna Lear; great granddaughter, Charlotte; brothers, John (Gloria) Bonifate, James (Kimberley) Bonifate, both of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; two sisters-in-law, Verdean Fleck of Lehigh Acres, Florida, Jetta Masters of Three Oaks; and a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Gerald Bonifate.

Family and friends will gather Thursday, September 14, 2023 from 4:00 p.m. until time of service at 6:00 p.m. in Wagner Family Funerals Pobocik Chapel, 106 Ash Street East, Three Oaks.

Mr. Bonifate will be laid to rest in Fort Custer National Cemetery, Battle Creek, Friday, September 15, 2023 at 11:30 a.m., where he will be accorded full military honors.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Joseph be made to the family, to assist in defraying expenses, in care of Wagner Family Funerals, 106 Ash Street East, Three Oaks, Michigan 49128.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Pobocik Chapel, Three Oaks. Please share a memory or a message online at www.wagnercares.com.

Anastasios "Tom" Stavropoulos

Anastasios "Tom" Stavropoulos, Age 79, passed away on September 7, 2023.

Beloved husbnad of Sylvia (nee Aivaliotis) Stavropoulos. Cherished son of the late Stamata (nee Alexopoulou) and the late Alexios Stavropoulos. Dear brother of Michael Stavropoulos and Georgia Javaras. Also survived by nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Visitatiion, Monday, September 11, 2023, 9:00AM to 10:00AM at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, 7560 S. Archer Road, Justice, Illinois.

Funeral, Monday, September 11, 2023, 10:00AM Service to be held at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, 7560 S. Archer Road, Justice, Illinois.

Interment, Evergreen Cemetery, Evergreen Park, Illinois.

HOROSCOPE

SEPTEMBER 7-13, 2023

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

The energy coming at you this week will help you to take charge of your habits and routines. This is great time to identify any weaknesses and to change them into positive qualities. Take this opportunity to find ways to improve your career and/or health rather than just worrying about them.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

Your attention will be focused on children and partners as an opportunity to communicate hard to talk about subjects will open up. Try not to be overly direct or use abrasive language. Take a gentle approach but by all means state your intentions and be as honest as possible.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

This is an excellent time to strengthen your connections with difficult family members as home and property issues will arise. Talking to your elder family members about what your family has been through could help you come to terms with current home life issues. Heritage appreciation week.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

You will be getting a nice boost of energy this week. Giving you the ability to tackle the renovation projects you have been putting off since last year. Focus on creating a serene and safe environment away from your work and social life. Unexpected financial backing will also help.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

There will be a renewal of sorts in your self-expression which will open up opportunities in your friendship sector. You will find that you have a lot more in common with someone than you thought you did and you will feel like it is easier to be yourself around them. Fun times and laughter ahead!

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

By taking the risk of going solo or doing something really unusual you will inspire others to reach for their goals. Or just by sharing your experiences and the stories of your life you will unknowingly motivate people to step out of their comfort zone and reach for their dreams. Thank you.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

This is good time to come to terms with the past and make peace with it rather than start something new. Reflect on what has happened and come to terms with how you feel about your past experiences then take the time to formulate and visualize what you would like to experience next.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

Even though you are in a very social and outgoing energy you will feel the need to create some private moments just for two. You could easily turn a casual affair into a lasting relationship just by getting away from the crowd and talking one-on-one. Take the time to get to know someone more.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

You are going to be busier at work than you think this week. Take your time to do a good job and go beyond expectations now because your reputation is being built. Keep any passionate or contrary views hidden and let any issues you have work out on their own rather than force resolutions.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

It will be much easier to communicate with frustrating people and situations this week. You are feeling a bit more diplomatic and are not afraid to take responsibility for your part or communicate with superiors. Use this week to create harmony between people who are at odds.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18

This is a good time for some self-evaluation and it is important that you understand your personal power and how you have been using it. If there is anything you find undesirable or that you feel unsure about channel this into a creative artistic expression and truly release any negativity.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

Use these last few weeks of summer to get in touch with others. Seek out old friends and get adventurous. You may be surprised by how much fun those "old haunts" can bring as the nights get longer. Something from the past will resurface to bring about new joy. Old and new will unite.

I think Tea in the early evening is Luxurious.
— Dino N. Fatouros

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		5		8				6
		2		4		5	8	
					1	3	7	
	2				7			
5		4		6		7		
	3		5					
4		6						
		7	3					
	8		1	7				

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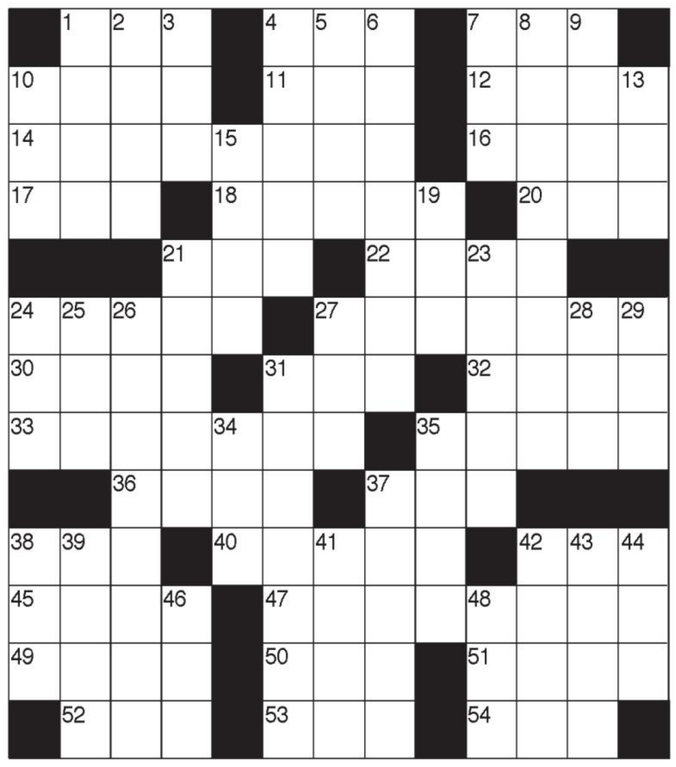
ACROSS

1 Tally
4 Basketball Assn. of America
7 Monkey
10 Jason's ship
11 Imitate
12 Famous zeppelin
14 Despot
16 Jutelander
17 Poetess Lowell
18 Narrow
20 Prohibit
21 Swed. county
22 Old-time firing pin
24 Grave
27 Toy
30 Ring of light
31 Berne's river
32 Medicinal herb
33 Proportionally assess
35 State (Ger.)
36 Anthology (abbr.)
37 Exclamations of delight
38 Hebrew letter
40 Comedy
42 "The Jungle Book" python
45 Feed the kitty
47 Hindu queen
49 Not (Lat.)
50 Turk. title
51 Religious image
52 Compass direction
53 Serum (pref.)
54 Sheep's cry

DOWN

1 Neat
2 Agency (abbr.)
3 Fly larva
4 Stick
5 Apocrypha (abbr.)
6 Air supply
7 Signed (abbr.)
8 Strauss opera
9 Sayings (suf.)
10 Amer. Dental Assn. (abbr.)
13 Marsh
15 Axillary
19 54 (Rom. numeral)
21 Discover
23 Scand. people
24 Drain
25 Possessive pronoun
26 Keeler (2 words)
27 No (Scot.)
28 Poly. beefwood
29 But
31 Uncle of Jason
34 Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (abbr.)
35 Afr. tree
37 Pickled bamboo shoots
38 Defiant shout
39 Son of Judah
41 Choler
42 N.Z. parrot
43 Wild ox
44 Own (Scot.)
46 Gelderland city
48 Cut of beef



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PUBLIC NOTICES

ADVERTISEMENT FOR QUALIFICATIONS

New Buffalo Area Schools is proceeding with a Planned Unit Development (PUD) on 12332 Lubke Road, New Buffalo, MI 49117. Beginning Wednesday, September 13 a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will be released to the public to seek private investors/developers to partner with New Buffalo Area School to develop the property. The Request for Qualifications: New Buffalo Area Schools Attainable Housing Project document may be examined on the district's website www.nbas.org under the "news" category. There are specific qualifications that developers will need to demonstrate that can be found on page 5 of the RFQ.

For any questions on the RFQ, or scope of work, can be submitted to Eric Neagu at eneagu@anterogroup.com. Printed copies of the RFQ may be obtained at the Superintendent's Office at 1112 East Clay Street, New Buffalo, MI 49117.

Interested investors/developers must submit qualifications documents to Dr. Michael Lindley New Buffalo Area Schools 1112 East Clay Street, New Buffalo, MI 49117 or mlindley@nbas.org (subject line: Attainable Housing RFQ Response) by October 4, 2023 at 5:00 EST.

3	7	5	9	8	2	1	4	6
1	6	2	7	4	3	5	8	9
8	4	9	6	5	1	3	7	2
6	2	1	4	3	7	9	5	8
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7	3	8	5	1	9	6	2	4
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2	8	3	1	7	6	4	9	5

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Bridgman's Shoreline Resiliency Committee to host second Weko Beach Clean-Up to coincide with The Alliance for the Great Lakes' 'Day of Action'

Eleven million pounds of plastic enter Lake Michigan every year, according to statistics displayed in "The Blue Paradox" exhibit now running at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry.

Not only are microplastics being found in beer made with Great Lakes Water, recent studies have them showing up in the human bloodstream and lower respiratory tract. The average person could be ingesting a credit card's worth each week. American Marine Biologist Sylvia Earle has noted that we are at a tipping point, but she said that "we still have the opportunity to tip things back in the right direction if we act now."

The Bridgman Shoreline Resiliency Committee invites families to take action at Weko Beach from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Sept. 23, at its second beach clean-up of the year. Scheduled in partnership with The Alliance for the Great Lakes' Annual Adopt-a-Beach program, when thousands of volunteers will clean and celebrate Great Lakes shorelines as part of the International Coastal Cleanup, the Weko Beach event will feature deputy executive director and senior planner for the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission Marcy Hamilton, who will provide an overview of the pollution risks (they are not only plastic) to our local water resources. According to the Great Lakes Commission, the Great Lakes contain 84% of North America's freshwater and provide drinking water for more than 40 million people. Hamilton will highlight some specific projects to improve our local water resources.

"Everyone can and needs to play a role in improving and protecting our creeks, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and Lake Michigan," she said.

Skye Williams, winner of Shoreline Resiliency logo design contest, with her mother, Ashley Williams, unit director of Boys & Girls Club site at Bridgman Public Schools

In addition, Skye Williams, winner of the Shoreline Resiliency Logo Design Contest, will be honored. A fifth grader at Stewart Elementary in Stevensville, Williams was inspired to submit an entry in the competition after taking part in the Earth Day Clean-Up event at Weko Beach. She said the event "made me feel like I could make a difference. It made me want to be more helpful to the community." Her winning design was chosen from more than 25 entries submitted by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Southwest Michigan.

Parking for the event is free; Dunkin' Donuts will be provided, courtesy of Linda Gedeon-Kuhn, a board member for the Bridgman Foundation for Educational Excellence, and all participants will receive a refillable water bottle with the new logo. Financial assistance for this project was partially provided by the Michigan Coastal Management Program, Water Resources Division, EGLE, with funding through the National Coastal Zone Management Program. Advanced registration can be accessed at adopt.greatlakes.org.

The Greater Bridgman Shoreline Resiliency Committee was formed in response to the city's participation in The Coastal Leadership Academy created by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's Coastal Management Program and the Michigan Association of Planning. More information is available at www.bridgman.org/292/shoreline-resiliency-committee.

The Alliance for the Great Lakes is a nonpartisan nonprofit working across the region to protect our most precious resource: the fresh, clean, and natural waters of the Great Lakes.

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Southwest Michigan provides recreational and extracurricular activities for kids aged six to 18. This year marks its 25th anniversary helping kids to reach their full potential. Nearly 170 children were registered for the summer program in Bridgman. — STAFF REPORTS

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Lilly Hiatt w/ Nathan Graham
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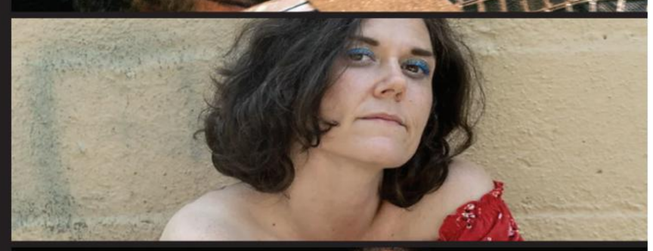

SuperBlue: Kurt Elling & Charlie Hunter
FRI 9/29 8 P.M. ET

Rodney Crowell: The Chicago Sessions Tour
with Special Guest Laurel Lewis
SUN 10/1 7 P.M. ET

An Evening with Shovels & Rope
SAT 10/7 8 P.M. ET

Dave Bruzza
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